# The Orthodox Herald

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JANUARY 1/14

We know that the church new year starts on September 1/14. There is no mention of it on January 1/14, but we do find listed the Circumcision of Our Lord and St. Basil. January 1 as the New Year is a secular holiday. However, we find in some parishes that a Molieben, a prayer service, is sung thanking God for the blessings we have received in the past year and asking Him to keep us in good health and to grant us any special needs or desires during the coming year. Many times this special service is held at midnight so that we may enter the new year with prayer to God for His mercy and protection. This is not mandated by the Church.

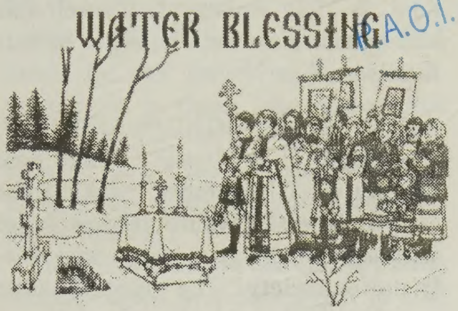
However, the Circumcision and St. Basil are to be commemorated. We read about the Circumcision in St. Luke 2:21. This law was given to Abraham in Genesis 17:10,12,14. St. Paul refers to circumcision as "Old Testament baptism." It was prescribed for every male child at eight days of age.

St. Basil was born in Cappadocia around 330 AD into an old Christian family of wealth and distinction with a remarkable religious history: his grandmother, Macrina, his father, Basil, his sister, Emmelia, his two brothers, Gregory and Peter, are all listed with the saints.

He received a good education. He then traveled extensively through Egypt, Palestine and Syria, where he made a point of visiting monasteries. Here he learned about the great Desert Fathers, which led him later to write rules for Christian monastic life. The monastic life of the Orthodox Church is still based on the principles he laid down.

He was ordained a priest in 365

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*"Why do we bless water on Theophany?"*

Orthodox Christians have always believed that the holiness of the Creator is reflected in all of creation. However, due to the abuse we inflict, all these elements are in need of constant purification and renewal. Since water is one of the first created things, and since it is essential to all life on earth, the Orthodox Church celebrates this regeneration of nature in a Water Blessing service. Although water can be blessed throughout the year, the blessing that takes place on the feast of Christ's baptism is the most solemn, and therefore known as the "Great Blessing."

Some people think this blessing to be is a "pagan" ritual and has no value for Christians. However, we know that this ritual was performed by the Jews during Old Testament times and now takes on a new meaning for Christians. Since the Son of God became man and was baptized in the Jordan River, all matter in the world is sanctified. To symbolize Christ's baptism, the priest immerses a cross into the water. The service of blessing affirms that all the world's water has been sanctified, and that it is

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THE DIVINE LITURGY

The Origin

The greatest and holiest of all the church services is the Divine Liturgy, when the Sacrament of Holy Communion is celebrated. The Greek word "Liturgy" means public worship. All Christians tried to attend it. It is also called "Eucharist," which means "thanksgiving" because the Holy Gifts of bread and wine are offered in thanksgiving for God's love and sacrifice for the world. The whole service represents in symbols Christ's life on earth, especially His Sacrifice, Passion, Death and Resurrection.

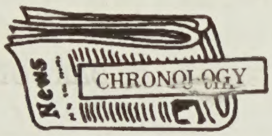
The Lord Jesus Christ Himself established the Sacrament of His Most Holy Body and Blood. Long before His Passion He told His disciples and people: "I am the Bread of Life ... If any man eateth of it, he shall live forever... The Bread that I give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world ... Whosoever eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

And so He prepared them for the great mystery of the Eucharist. In that upper chamber at the Last Supper before He gave Himself up to be crucified for us all, He took the bread blessed it and gave it to His disciples, saying: "Take, eat, this is My Body, which is given for you: do this in remembrance of Me."

Then He blessed the wine cup and said: "Drink ye all of this; for this is My Blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you and for many for the remission of sins." Our Lord established this Holy Sacrament to remind people through the ages of His love for them and of His death for their salvation, and to unite us all with Himself forever through the

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JANUARY 2005

THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN POLAND is autocephalous. It has 570,000 members. Recently seven of its members received the Gold Cross of Merit from the government for services to ecumenism and social work.

ON SUPER BOWL SUNDAY many Orthodox Churches sponsor Souper Bowl Caring when young people in the parish collect canned food and money for charity. IOCC furnishes information. For info www.souperbowl.com or call 877/803-4622.

THE VA has opened a new cemetery for veterans at Williamstown, NJ. It was blessed by Fr. John Bohush of Philadelphia with George Sinitsky singing the responses.

STUDENTS OF ST. TIKHON'S THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY have published a booklet By the Waters. Among the articles are four on the teachings of St. Paul as interpreted by the Holy Fathers. Send $6 for a postpaid copy to St. Tikhon's Seminary, PO Box 130, South Canaan, PA 18459.

RUSSIA'S FAMOUS HERMITAGE MUSEUM has had cats as part of its security system since 1764 when Catherine the Great brought in selected cats to keep the St. Petersburg building rodent free. About 50 cats are on patrol and are cared for by two cat corps caretakers.

KUDOS to the Greek Orthodox parishes in Rochester and Minneapolis, MN, that have opened a Philoxenia (friend of strangers) house in Rochester to allow Orthodox Christians to stay during treatment at the renowned Mayo Clinic. The house next to Holy Anargyroi Church has accommodations for 14 people in four family groups.

AN INTER-RELIGIOUS COUNCIL has urged that Russia's traditional holiday on 7 November marking the 1917 Bolshevik revolution be replaced with a public holiday which "genuinely unites society." The group is made up of Orthodox, Muslim, Jewish and Buddhist leaders.

THE CARPATHO-RUSSIAN PLAIN CHANT has been arranged in four-part harmony by Helen Spanovich and is available for $25 from Liturgical Publications, OH, 312 Garfield St., Johnstown, PA 15906. The spiral bound book contains music for the Divine Liturgy, the eight tones and feast days.

ANOTHER ORTHODOX CAMPUS CENTER has been opened. Purdue University joins the University of Illinois in providing a house for Orthodox living and activities. For info: www.saintalexis.org.

AT A SESSION OF THE HOLY SYNOD OF THE CHURCH OF GREECE, discussion was held on the revival of female deacons who were part of the church during the 4th and 5th centuries. It was decided that women could be used as deacons in remote monasteries at the discretion of bishops. However, women would not be formally ordained.

TALKS CONTINUE BETWEEN THE patriarchate of Russia and the Church Outside of Russia. It is hoped that unity will be restored in four years. Topics, still under discussion, include attitude toward non-Orthodox, the place of Synod in the Patriarchate after unity, the problem of parallel parishes, approval of church legal procedure, properties, etc.



*Holy Trinity Serbian Orthodox Church in Butte, Montana, which celebrated its 100th anniversary in July.*

REPRESENTATIVES OF ORTHODOX SOCIAL AGENCIES from 25 countries met in Finland to develop a new association to develop a global network to strengthen Orthodoxy's answer to poverty and injustice. Information about this Pan-Orthodox endeavor can be found at www.orthodoxdiakonia.net.

AMONG THOSE HIT BY THE HURRICANES in Florida were several Monastic communities around North Fort Myers, Florida. They were badly damaged. Holy Theotokos Monastery with its St. Nectarios Church, 111 Evergreen Rd., No. Ft. Myers, FL 33903, for info 239/997-2846; St. Andrew's Skete (Men's), 4181 Silver Sword Ct., No. Ft. Myers, FL 33903, for info 239/997-2847; St. Nicholas Monastery (Women's), 1340 Piney Rd., No. Ft. Myers, FL 33903, for info 239/997-5079.

SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE WEEK is held in January with a march in Washington, DC.

THE RELICS of St. John Chrysostom and St. Gregory the Theologian have been returned to the Patriarch of Constantinople by Pope John Paul II. Both SS John and Gregory served as Patriarchs of Constantinople in the 4th century. There relics disappeared from their original home in Constantinople in the sack of 1204 by the Crusaders. Both saints are commemorated on January 30, along with St. Basil on the day commonly called the Three Holy Hierarchs.

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## JANUARY 1/14

and was consecrated a bishop in 370. His tenure was very difficult. Christians in his diocese were being persecuted by the Arian emperor, Valens and Basil was called before the local authorities to explain things. He was very firm and unyielding in his replies. The controversies continue with Valens fearing him and trying to diminish his authority by means of new laws.

St. Basil did not dwell on his difficulties but made hay while the sun shown." He wrote many works on dogmatic, liturgical, ascetic and homiletical subjects. He is the author of St. Basil's Liturgy, which is served ten times a year, including January 1, and which served as a pattern for St. John's Liturgy, which is served most days in the Orthodox Church.

Besides this, he is known for his charitable enterprises. He built dwelling houses, a church, a hospital, a hospice for travelers and provided for a staff of doctors, nurses and artisans. The project was so extensive that it was called a new town. He died on January 1/14 in the year 379.

Truly a saint to be emulated!

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## JANUARY 6/19

spiritually purified.

Holy Water is used for many purposes "for the healing of soul and body." We use it to bless everything from churches and ecclesiastical items, to homes and cars; the faithful also drink and sprinkle themselves with it.

As well as the usual blessing of a container of water in the church, it is also traditional to bless a flowing and active body of water (the ocean, a river, etc.). This is a way of sanctifying our area and asking God's blessing upon all of us who live here.

*DMM*

(Continued from front page)
## THE DIVINE LITURGY

communion of His Holy Body and Blood.

After Christ's Ascension, the Apostles and Christians met every day for the Sacrament of Eucharist. They prayed, sang psalms and hymns, and broke the bread in "remembrance" of Christ, according to His commandment.

The order of the service was laid down by the Apostles themselves, passed on to those who came after them, and learned by heart. This was done to guard the Christian worship against the mockery and blasphemy of the heathen.

The oldest order of the Liturgy to be written down and one which is still kept in the East is the Liturgy of St. James, the Apostle. When more than 300 years after Christ, Christianity became the accepted faith of the Roman Empire, this Apostle's Liturgy was written down and arranged, first by St. Basil, the Great who was the Archbishop of Caesarea, and then by St. John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople. We honor both of these saints on January 30. These two forms have been celebrated ever since and few hymns and prayers have been added or removed from them. The two are alike, but St. Basil's has a few more prayers and is a bit longer.

### PRESS FUND

Thank you/Spasebo for all who donate not only to this fund but to some of the other funds. Truly, you help us to keep publishing. Anne Drago, Linda Poseznick, Christine Hazzard, Barbara Parhizgar, S.H. Hojnicki, Caroline Hallman, Anne Dorozynski, Irene Allen, Helen Bickowsky, Sonya Naryshkin, MD, Richard Sanderson, Ann O'Brien, Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Petronko, Thomas Ridgik, Raymond Rusnak, Ethel Watlock, Fr. Sergius Willis, Barbara Andrews, Paul Godfrey, Doris Koveal, Mary Frissora, Mary Ardan, Ruth Larcom, Nicholas Halesky, Jean Kutzer, A. Pinko, Dr. and Mrs. Jerome Wolf, Oleg Dudkin, Olga Warhol, Anonymous, Nikolaj Karpowitsch, Anne Krafchak, Steve and Irene Pacak, Olga Kozlowski, Henry Grabowski, Catherine Shaffchick, Mary Skumanich.

Annette Milkovich in memory of her brother Peter Dziama.

Stephen and Julia Petronko in memory of Fr. Basil Stroyen.

Elizabeth Mitrook in memory of the Boska Family.

Marie Derkasch in memory of her husband William.

Anna Borovoy in memory of daughter Valerie Borovoy, who died on September 13, 2004.

Mary Pavluchuk in memory of parents Fedor and Anna Pochinok, brothers Michael and John, husband Joseph, brother-in-law John Boga, priests Fr. Dimitry Kudrikoff and Fr. Basil Stroyen, in-laws, Paul and Anna Pavluchuk and for health of Matushka Nina.

### PASCHAL CALENDAR FOR 2005

| | |
|---|---|
| Sunday of Publican and Pharisee | February 20 |
| Beginning of Pre-Lenten Triodon | |
| Meatfast Sunday | March 6 |
| Cheesefast/Forgiveness Sunday | March 13 |
| Lent Begins | March 14 |
| Palm Sunday | April 24 |
| Pascha/Easter for Orthodox | May 1 |
| Ascension | June 9 |
| Pentecost | June 19 |
| Easter for Western Christians | March 27 |

### BAPTISM AND PSALM 23

Psalm 23 is one of the most familiar of all the psalms. It was written by King David, who was reflecting upon his youth when he was watching over flocks of sheep. In the psalm, he compares God's loving care for His people to the shepherd. Many analogies are drawn from this comforting psalm but perhaps only the Orthodox Church sees in it the prefiguring of Jesus Christ as the Good Shepherd and our first ways of encountering him in our lives: our baptisms, chrismation and receiving holy eucharist.

If we examine the psalm, we see that in it are mentioned the components of all three sacraments, which are given at the same time in the Orthodox Church: water in baptism, oil in chrismation and the cup in communion.

## SOBORNOST

We have missed Fr. Michael Dahulich's learned articles on Sobornost in the Church. He has been very busy working on accreditation for St. Tikhon's Theological Seminary of which he is Dean.

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The Notion of Catholicity

Scholarly research indicates that attempts at explaining the meaning of the word "catholic" as an attribute of the true Church do not appear until after the middle of the 4th century. In the Nicene canon (325), the term katholike ekklesia denotes a very concrete reality on two levels: the Church universal and the local community headed by a regular bishop.

What are the Council of Nicea's (325) enactments regarding Church structure? Canons 4 and 6 establish a procedure for the election of bishops, and in this connection we find the first historical mention of "metropolitan bishops." Canon 5 states that twice a year a synod must be summoned within the framework of each province (ecclesiastically set up to parallel the already existing civil territories) to serve as a higher court to which clerics and laymen may appeal if they think they have been unjustly condemned by their own bishop.

This synodal institution is certainly not at all an innovation in church life. What constitutes the novelty is the determination of the frequency within the institutional framework of the provinces. And even the regular gathering of a provincial council is not innovative, at least in the East: the custom is mentioned in the middle of the 3rd century by Bishop Firmilian of Caesarea. Fr. John Meyendorff stated: "Some of these measures confirmed already existing practices. The recognition and the ordination of a new bishop by his colleagues of neighboring churches and, in particular, the confirmation of his election as a bishop of the main church of the area were principles known before Nicea. The metropolitan's right to confirm episcopal elections in his province was the essential novelty introduced by this Council. It gave his authority legal character."

Evidence from other canons clearly shows that the Nicene fathers considered the "local church" as the basic ecclesiastical entity. Canon 15 and 16 forbid the transfer of both bishops and clerics from one church to another. The Nicene fathers gave general guidelines regarding the acceptance of Novatianist and Paulianist clergy into the Church, but the local bishops are given wide discretion in implementing such decisions. Regarding penitents, the Council gives to every bishop the possibility of alleviating penalties. Such freedom is not allowed; however, without qualification, and some of Nicea's enactments appear very strict. It would appear such a stance is again based on the Nicene fathers' determination not to deviate from traditional principles, especially those believed to have originated from apostolic times.

Next: Election of Bishops
Fr. Michael Dahulich, Ph.D.

A MEDICAL OPINION: Germs and the Reception of Holy Communion ... *unto the Healing of soul and body...*
by Emanuel Kolyvas, M.D., The Sign (of the Theotokos), Montreal
reprinted from: Canadian Orthodox Messenger, Spring 1995

Contrary to popular opinion, wines, and other beverages of antiquity produced through fermentation, were probably more important in providing disease-free drinking fluids than in their tendency to intoxicate. Ancient Greeks drank their water mixed with wine, and also used wine to cleanse wounds and soak dressings. More recently, military physicians of the last century observed that during epidemics of cholera, wine drinkers were relatively spared by the disease, and troops were advised to mix wine into the water.

Wine has been shown to be an effective antiseptic even when the alcohol is removed. In fact, 10% alcohol is a poor antiseptic, and alcohol only becomes optimally effective at concentrations of 70%. The antiseptic substances in wine are inactive in fresh grapes because these molecules are bound to complex sugars. During fermentation, these antiseptic substances are split off from the sugars and in this way become active. These molecules are polyphenol, a class of substances used in hospitals to disinfect surfaces and instruments. The polyphenol of wine has been shown to be some thirty-three times more powerful than the phenol used by Lister when he pioneered antiseptic surgery.

Same year wines can be diluted up to ten times before beginning to show a decrease in their antiseptic effect. The better wines gradually improve with age over the first ten years and can be diluted twenty times without a decrease of the antiseptic effect. This effect then remains more or less constant over the next twenty years and becomes equivalent to a new wine after another twenty-five years. (Modern antiseptics and antibiotics for disinfecting wounds have surpassed wine effectiveness because the active ingredients in wine are rapidly bound and inactivated by proteins in body tissues.)

In preparing communion, the hot water that is added to the wine will increase greatly the antiseptic effect of the polyphenols. Disinfection occurs more rapidly and more effectively at 45 degrees centigrade than at room temperature (22-25 degrees). Another contribution to the antiseptic effect comes from the silver, copper, zinc that make up the chalice itself, ensuring that microbes are unable to survive on its surface.

Throughout the centuries no disease has ever been transmitted by the taking of Holy Communion. Diseases, such as Influenza and Hepatitis B, known to be transmitted by shared eating utensils, have never been acquired from the communion spoon. HIV is known not to be transmitted through shared eating utensils, and considering the antiseptic qualities of the Holy Communion received by the faithful, there is no likelihood of acquiring HIV infection through the Common Cup.

## MEMORIES
### *Tommy Nazat*
### There and Back

When I was a little girl, every few months my aunts, uncles and cousins would come in from out of town for the weekend. We would all gather at Grandma's house. There was a lot of joy, food, noise and fun.

Inevitably all of the ladies would decide on Saturday afternoon to go on a little shopping trip, leaving the kids with their fathers and a football game on TV. Whenever I saw the ladies, all happy, getting ready to leave, I would start saying, "Where are you going? Can I come? Where are you going?" I always wondered why they were so happy. Why weren't we kids included?

Of course the moms would never let it be known to us kids where they were really going, but they didn't want to lie either. So they would say they are going *Tommy Nazat.* That is Russian for "There and Back." They were going there and back. A true answer. *Tommy Nazat.*

To a nine-year-old little girl, *Tommy Nazat* was some kind of special being. *Tommy Nazat* made you happy. I wanted to meet this *Tommy Nazat.* I wanted to go. I could go, I was told, when I was older.

Now that I am older the idea of *Tommy Nazat* still intrigues me. It's not the shopping trip to which I wanted to go "there and back." It is to GOD.

We all came from GOD and we will return hopefully to GOD's mansion at life's end. Before being born to earth GOD knew us. We were "there" with GOD. And now we strive to go "back" to GOD. There and back. *Tommy Nazat.*

So after almost fifty years I still want to go *Tommy Nazat,* "there" from GOD and "back" to GOD. One day, I pray, that we all go.

Claudia Zielinski

Please submit your stories and anecdotes for *"Memories"* to:
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Lorain, OH 44055
or e-mail:
mpysarchyk@hotmail.com

## ALASKAN CHRISTMAS STAR

During the time I spent as a missionary in Alaska, I found great joy in teaching. Whether I was reading the story of St. Herman to little ones or providing religious instruction to older students, I was very grateful for the opportunity to work with such polite and receptive young people.

One experience was especially memorable. Seated on the floor of the village church, we missionaries taught small groups of students. A teen and a boy of about four quietly listened as I explained the major Feast Days of the Church through icons. When I finished, the young man inquired, "Can I ask you a question?" Seeing that the cross I wore was the same as the one on top of his church, he wondered why it had three bars. There were a number of Protestants in this community, and the question had, no doubt, been raised to him. After I provided the explanations, the teen thoughtfully nodded and said, "That makes sense."

I had long wondered about something myself. Now I had been given the opportunity to learn about it first-hand. Now the teacher would become the student. "Can I ask <u>you</u> a question?" His initial expression of surprise turned into a broad smile when I asked, "Would you tell me about 'Starring'?"

The tradition of the Alaskan Christmas Star is observed in towns and villages throughout Alaska. During the Nativity of Christ, January 7th through 9th, the church choir visits the homes of the faithful singing the joyful news that "Christ Is Born!" The teen shared that the star leads the choir procession through the village. At each home while Christmas hymns and folk carols are sung, the large, pinwheel shaped star is spun. That coming Christmas was going to be very special for the young man because it was the first time he would have the honor of carrying the star.

During the dark, cold winters in Alaska, the ornate stars, decorated with Christmas tinsel, not only represent the Star followed by the Wise Men but also a tradition that draws communities together. Depending on the area in Alaska, different customs, such as gift-giving and feasting, may be included with the caroling. After a choir visits the homes of the faithful in their own community, they may travel to a neighboring village with their "star." Although the travel might be difficult, especially this time of the year, the effort is made because it is an opportunity to share the joy of the Nativity with friends in another Orthodox community.

The "Starring tradition" actually had its origins in Eastern Europe where "stars" with icons were carried from home to home during the Nativity. At the beginning of the last century, a Ukrainian missionary, Fr. Iakov Korchinskii, is assumed to have brought Carpatho-Russian folk carols, or *koliady,* and the beginning of the "Starring tradition" to Alaska. After learning its history, I was pleased to know that a tradition that my ancestors observed in Galicia many years ago is still faithfully preserved in Alaska today.

Before the young man finished sharing, we happily found something else we had in common. I asked about the hymns sung during the "Starring." All those he mentioned were familiar to me – among them were the Nativity troparion and kontakion and 'Many Years'. "We sing them in English and Slavonic," then he added, "but I like Slavonic best." I smiled and said, "So do I."

Margaret Pysarchyk

## LIGHTER MOMENT

A fellow met one of his college classmates and asked him how things were going with him.

"Fine," answered his old friend. "I found out how to stop people from bugging me about when I'm getting maried."

"How's that"? he was asked.

"Well, when old women come up to me at weddings, poke me in the ribs, and tell me: "You're next!"

I do the same to them when I see them ... at funerals.

## HOUSE BLESSING

Yes, blessings can be repeated. You do it many times. Certainly, "God, bless you" has been said many times to the same person. The house blessing is another blessing which is repeated. We live in our houses where we may argue, have bad thoughts, watch questionable shows on TV, etc. We need it blessed as the prayer of blessing makes clear:

*Prayer of Blessing of Homes*

*O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, who deigned to enter into the house of Zacchaeus, the Publican, thereby bringing to him salvation: now protect (names) who live here from all evil, blessing their lives; and guard them from all aggression, granting them all that is good and beneficial for them. For Thou, O God, are the One who has mercy on us and saves us, now and forever, unto ages of ages. Amen*

It is the custom on Theophany that after the blessing of water or in the days following, the priest visits his parishioners to bless their homes with the holy water.

Since this is a religious service, the house is tidied, the TV, radio, computer and all other such are turned off and everyone gathers around the table which is readied for the blessing. The table is covered with a white cloth. On it is found a candle, matches, a bowl for the Holy Water, a list of all names of people living in the house, an icon or cross and the Holy Water. All pets are put into another room during the service. The priest will sing the tropar. Sing along if you are familiar with the hymn. When the priest finishes the short service, he will give the candle to the father or someone named John who will then go to the rooms which are to be blessed. The candle bearer and priest will return to the table where the service will finish with everyone venerating the cross the priest holds.

The ceremony is brief but beautiful. It signifies the beginning of both the new year and reminds us of our baptism when the soul is cleansed.

* * * * * *

Never forget God's judgment. Never presume His mercy. Always remember His love.

## WINTER'S GRACE

So often we hear quoted from Ecclesiastes 3:1: "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven." The beginning of the new year is a good time to review the past and look ahead to the future.

One year on the first Sunday of the year, everyone in my Bible class was asked to make a list of goals for the new year. We sealed the lists in an envelope which was put into the file until the following January. Seeing what I wrote the year before was very interesting.

As I reviewed the past, I think of times when the pages in the book of my life seemed to flip over in rapid succession. At other times, when pain or trouble claimed all of my attention, the pages seemed to stick together. Some pages are exciting, others are sad or scary; but most of them are ordinary.

As helpful as this review may have been, however, I vowed not to spend too much time thinking of the past or trying to catch a glimpse of what lies ahead.

Today deserves my and our attention. Carpe diem – seize the day. Knowing that we can handle only one day at a time, God gives us one day at a time. I want to learn to give my attention to God's gift – today's page in my book. Isn't that wise for everyone?

## LIGHTER MOMENT

A young brunette woman went into the doctor's office with the complaint that her body hurts wherever she touches it.

"Impossible," said her doctor. "Show me."

She took her finger and pushed her elbow and screamed in agony. She then pushed her knee and screamed. The same when she touched her ankle.

The doctor thought awhile and asked: "You're not really a brunette, are you?"

Puzzled, she answered: "No, I'm really a blonde."

"I thought so," answered the doctor, "You have a broken finger."

## *Undique (from everywhere)*

Theophany was commemorated on the Church calendar years before Christmas was placed there.

It was found that each person is in reality three different ages at the same time: the chronological age, which is determined by the number of years one has lived; the biological age, which is determined by the condition and state of the body; and the psychological age, which is measured by how a person feels and acts.

According to the church – this is year 7513 since the creation of the world. In earlier days, this year was printed in religious books along with the A.D. date.

Traditionally, flowers have been a symbol of the resurrection. In planting flowers or placing flowers on a grave, Christians testify to their expectation of the resurrection. Of course, many who decorate graves do not think of this symbolism.

The container, sometimes in the form of a church, which is found on the holy altar which holds the reserved sacrament, is called the tabernacle or ark. It is also known as the artophorion.

Clergy and laypeople who no longer need their religious books are reminded that the seminary libraries may wish to add them to their collection. Most Orthodox libraries have their acquisitions on computer and can be obtained on interlibrary loan.

According to a legend about St. Basil the Great, there are two angels at the church's entrance. Their task is to write in their scrolls the names of those who come to worship God. When God unfurls the scroll on the last day, how many times will your name be on it?

We use incense in our worship of God. This is Scriptural. We can read in Revelations 8:3,4 that incense has part in the worship of God.

# Editor's Notes

This month I have been researching and reading much about St. Basil and St. John Chrysostom. Their days of commemoration come in January and the relics of St. John Chrysostom were returned to the Orthodox Church by the Roman Catholic Church. As we well know, both of the saints, John and Basil, are authors or compilers of the Divine Liturgies, which are served most often in the Orthodox Church. We have in our library many old Divine Liturgy books and find very little change in the services in over 1000 years. However, we are disturbed to find that more changes have creeped in in the last 25 years than in all the hundreds of years previously.

For example, in many churches litanies are omitted, in others litanies are added. Some priests leave the royal doors open during the whole liturgy, while others open and close them according to the book. In some churches the curtain is missing from behind the royal doors, while in others it is split down the center. Many parishes don't use incense, while in others the priest uses cold water, not "kepetok," for communion cup. Then in some places the silent prayers are said aloud by the priest. I am tempted to imitate Judge Judy and say: "What part of silently don't you understand?" How about the loud "Amen" by everyone at the consecration? If this continues, our prayer books will have to either have variations printed as I do with recipes in The Kitchen Corner or a prayer book of the day must be furnished. I attended Divine Liturgy in a church recently where prayer books were given to visitors. There were so many changes they couldn't follow them. I am disturbed by this. Are you?

Another parish has joined the Packet Plan. We have about 200 parishes from four jurisdictions. You can help us grow by donating or sponsoring copies to a parish for a year. We are not subsidized by anyone. Our faithful readers help us to keep publishing.

**A new civil year is starting. May we ever keep in mind the prokimen for the day: "Save Thy people, O Lord and bless Thy inheritance." What a comfort to know God is watching over us.**

God Be With You,

*Matushka Nina Stroyen*

BIBLE QUIZ

1. What Asian city was the fifth of the seven churches mentioned by John in Revelations?
2. In what Canaanite city were Joseph's bones finally laid to rest?
3. What city was the home of Peter, Andrew and Philip?
4. Where was Cornelius converted?
5. Near what city did Peter profess his faith in Jesus?
6. Where did Jesus perform His first miracle?
7. Where did Jesus stay when John the Baptist was in prison?

ANSWERS:
1. Sardis (Revelations 3:1-6)
2. Shechem (Joshua 24:32)
3. Bethsaida (John 1)
4. Caesarea (Acts 10:24-48)
5. Caesarea Philipii (Matthew 16:13-18)
6. Cana (John 2:1-11)
7. Capernaum (Matthew 4:12-13)

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THANK YOU ALL.




We remember the cakes made by our grandmothers. They were solid and baba served them sliced thinly. One such cake was a poppyseed cake, which baba made in her battered angel food cake pan. My niece sent me a cake which tasted like baba's but was made the easy way, taking advantage of a modern mix. It was good! Here is Sasha's recipe.

POPPYSEED CAKE

2 pkgs. pound cake mix
Grated rind of one lemon
Grated rind of one orange
1/4 cup poppyseed
Confectioners sugar

Prepare pound cake mix as directed on packages. Fold in lemon and orange rinds. Taste poppyseed to be sure it is not bitter. Add to mix. Stir well. Pour into greased and floured 2 quart pan. Use your angel food or bundt pan. Bake in slow oven (325°) for 1 1/4 hours or until firm to touch. Carefully unmold and cool on rack. Sprinkle with sifted confectioners sugar. Cut into thin slices to serve.

ST. ANTHONY

Saint Anthony, called the Great, lived in Egypt between AD 251 and 356. At age 18, the gospel text "If you wish to be perfect, go sell all that you have and then follow me" so moved him that he left everything behind and retired to an inaccessible place in the wilderness where he dedicated his life to God in manual work and continual prayer. In his old age, he imparted wisdom to his disciples and encouraged them to lead a monastic life. Because he was the first Christian to turn to a monastic life, he is considered to be the first monk and the father of monasticism. His feast is celebrated on Jan. 17/30.

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## WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

On January 6/19 we find a Holy Day which is known by many names. The names found on the Church Calendar are either Epiphany or Theophany. What is the difference? Epiphany simply means appearance, while Theophany means the appearance of God. While these are the names used in church, among believers we may hear the names yordan (Jordan) and the Baptism. Yordan from the name of the River Jordan where Christ was baptized and Baptism from the event that took place.

This event is described in all four gospels: Matthew 3:13-17, Mark 1:9-11, Luke 3:21-22 and John 1:29-34. St. John goes into the greatest detail.

John saw Jesus coming and said: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This is He preferred before me:"... and John bore record saying: "I saw the Spirit descending like a dove upon Him. He that sent me said: "upon Whom you shall see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptized with the Holy Ghost.

Theophany is the greatest Holy Day coming after Easter and Pentecost. It is greater than Christmas. It is interesting that the Nativity of Christ is mentioned in only Luke 2:1-7 while the Baptism is mentioned in all four.

The Eve or day before is a strict fast day and in many homes a special supper is served.

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Worry pulls tomorrow's cloud over today's sunshine.

## *Home Bible Reading Schedule*

### JANUARY 2005

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. Col 2:8-12 | 17. Heb 3:5-10, 17-19 |
| 2. 2 Tim 4:5-8 | 18. Heb 4:1-13 |
| 3. James 2:14-26 | 19. Heb 5:11-6:8 |
| 4. James 3:1-10 | 20. Heb 7:1-6 |
| 5. James 3:11-4:6 | 21. Heb 7:18-25 |
| 6. James 4:12-19, 5:1-5 | 22. Eph 2:11-13 |
| 7. 2 Pet 1:1-10 | 23. 1 Tim 1:15-17 |
| 8. Eph 6:10-17 | 24. Heb 8:7-13 |
| 9. Eph 4:7-13 | 25. Heb 9:8-23 |
| 10. 1 Pet 2:21-3:9 | 26. Heb 10:1-18 |
| 11. 1 Pet 3:10-22 | 27. Heb 10:35-11:7 |
| 12. 1 Pet 4:1-11 | 28. Heb 11:8-16 |
| 13. 1 Pet 4:12-5:5 | 29. Eph 5:1-8 |
| 14. 2 Pet 1:1-10 | 30. Heb 13:7-16 |
| 15. 2 Tim 2:11-19 | 31. Heb 11:17-23, 27-31 |
| 16. Col 1:12-18 | |

## BIBLE STUDY

One lesson that we learned in commemorating Theophany is that our Lord sanctified all the universe by His Baptism in the River Jordan. We have discovered that all the universe is our home. We are at home in it because it belongs to God, our Eternal Heavenly Father.

In Ephesians 4:7-13, St. Paul shows us that all the universe is filled with Christ, who "ascended far above all the heavens" and also "descended into the lower parts of the earth" "that He might fill all things." Thus, to live in Christ is not something exotic and strange – something reserved for priests, monks, and other religious "professionals" or fanatics. To live in Christ is the most natural thing in the world, for it is He who made the world for us to live in and it is full of Him!

Each time we awake and begin our day by doing the things our daily routine requires, we start our life in Christ once again! It is as simple as that. We wash up, we get dressed, we pray, we prepare our meal, we eat, we wash our dishes, we go to school or to work – and each and everyone of these actions are part of our life in Christ.

Let us determine to be conscious of where we live. Let us live joyously, paying heed to the needs and the lives of others around us – and to this earth in which we shall live until our Lord, the good Shepherd, calls us beyond this world to live even more fully in His mystery which shall never end. Let us help each other to be conscientious participants in our community – to live together as God's beloved children, who do not dwell in darkness but who know the infinite love and unspeakable wisdom of the Trinity in Whose Life we share.

Fr. Ihor George Kutash, Ph.D.

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Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth; but God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise, God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong ... so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. God is the source of your life. (1 Cor 1:26-30)